

CITY HALL



TRANSLATOR: VINCELO
RAW PROVIDER: VINCELO
CLEANER: VINCELO
REDRAWER: VINCELO
TYPESETTER: VINCELO
PROOFREADER: GADNERRASH
SCER: VINCELO



CHAPITRE 2

*"FAIRY TALES DO NOT TELL CHILDREN THAT DRAGONS EXIST.
CHILDREN ALREADY KNOW THAT DRAGONS EXIST. FAIRY TALES
TELL CHILDREN THAT THE DRAGONS CAN BE KILLED."*

G.K. CHESTERTON



WE'VE BEEN
WAITING FOR AN
HOUR NOW...

WHAT ARE YOU
HIDING,
MALCOLM...?

I THINK THAT
AFTER 16 YEARS OF
WORKING FOR CITY
HALL, DEFENDING
YOUR IDEAS AND
EMBARRASSMENTS YOU
SHOULD TELL ME
WHAT IS GOING
ON!



COULD YOU AT THE VERY
LEAST TELL ME HOW A
WRITER, HOWEVER
GOOD HE IS, COULD
HELP US!



GREAT!

WHAT!?

YOU SAID A "GOOD"
WRITER... HOWEVER,
ACCORDING TO THE
CITY HALL TRIBUNE
OF ART, IT SEEMS THE
APPROPRIATE TERM
SHOULD BE A "BARELY"
WRITER!



OF COURSE, I WOULD
HAVE PREFERRED
"MENTOR" OR EVEN
"EXCEPTIONAL"...
BUT MY BOO PROBABLY
WOULDN'T SURVIVE
SUCH COMPLIMENTS.

HOWEVER,
EXCUSE MY
THIRDPOLITENESS...

I'M
VERNE...

JULIUS
VERNE...IT

...AN INVENTOR!



...AND A WRITER!



EVEN THOUGH
NOWADAYS THAT
TERM IS MORE THAN
CONTESTABLE, YES!!
IT STILL PROVES
ACCURATE WHEN I'M
BORED OR WHEN
SLEEP DOESN'T
COME TO ME!



THIS IS CHIEF
INSPECTOR
LESTER, CITY
HALL POLICE.

OF COURSE,
YOU ALREADY
KNOW WHO I
AM...



YOU'RE ONE OF MY MOST
APPRECIATED READERS,
AND ALSO THE MASTER OF
CEREMONY OF THIS
WHOLE CIRCUS THAT IS
OUR CITY OF LONDON!

PLEASED TO
SEE YOU
AGAIN, MAYOR
LITTLE!



ME TOO!



...EVEN THOUGH
IT SEEMS YOU
ARE STILL LACK-
ING COMMON
POLITENESS!

MY FATHER WILL CERTAINLY
BE SADDENED TO LEARN
ABOUT IT DURING YOUR NEXT
GAME OF ONLINE POKER!



MAY I NOW
INTRODUCE TO
YOU MY TRAVEL
COMPANION?



ARTHUR
CONAN
DOYLE-KIT

STUDENT, AMATEUR
WRITER, BEGINNER
CHEMIST...

AND NOVICE
HISTORIAN!



TO SUM IT UP, HE
HAS
EVERYTHING TO
LEARN THEN...



YOU'D BE
WRONG TO
THINK THAT,
CAPTAIN!

IT'S
INSPECTORY!

WHATEVER...



AS I WAS
SAIDING, THERE
IS A SUBJECT
IN WHICH HE
CAN OUTDO ALL
OF US...!!

AND BELIEVE ME,
WHEN I SAY THAT ALL
THE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
YOU HAVE AS
A POLICE PADRE
IN COMPARISON!!



I'D LIKE TO
SEE THAT...!!



AT FIRST GLANCE,
IT IS OBVIOUS
THAT YOU ARE A
CAREFUL MAN,
INSPECTOR...

YOUR MUSTACHE IS
FAULTLESSLY
TRIMMED, AND YOUR
CLOTHES ARE
IRONED WITH CARE.

HOWEVER, THE
DUST ON YOUR
SHOULDER LEAVES
TO THINK THAT YOU
WERE CALLED FOR
AN EMERGENCY.

AN EMERGENCY
SO IMPORTANT THAT YOU
DIDN'T HAVE THE TIME TO
TAKE THE CARE TO BE
PERFECTLY PRESENTABLE.

SEEING THE MARKS
YOUR FOOTSTEPS
LEAVE ON THE CARPET,
I CAN ASSUME THAT
YOU TOOK A CAB AND
WENT TO
THE DOWNTOWN...

FREAKING ROAD-
WORKS...

FROM THERE ON, AS CAN BE
SEEN FROM THE BLOODSTAINS
ON YOUR PANTS, I BELIEVE
YOU FOUND A VICTIM, RE-
CENTLY ADDRESSSED, AS WELL
AS CLUE OF SUCH MAJOR IM-
PORTANCE THAT YOU HASTILY
PUT IN YOUR POCKET.

THEN YOU CAME HERE TO
SHOW IT TO MAYOR
LITTLE...

ALL OF THIS WAS BE-
CAUSE THE SITUATION,
EXCLUSIVE AND NEVER
SEEN BEFORE, REQUIRED
THAT YOU DID NOT LOSE
A SINGLE SECOND. ALL
OF THIS EXPLAINS THE
SALLOW COLOR OF YOUR
SKIN, NOT USED TO SO
MUCH STRESS AND EXER-
CISE.

THE THING I CAN'T EXPLAIN,
HOWEVER, IS THIS SMELL
OF GUNPOWDER YOU HAVE
AROUND YOURSELF...

HAVE YOU USED A
FIREARM RECENTLY?



IMPRESSIONS ...!!

HOW DID YOU
KNOW...?!



THE FACT THAT YOU
LACK EXPERIENCE ON
THE DYNAMIC TURN
OF EVENTS THAT IS
UNFOLDING!!



I NOTICED
THAT SHEET OF
PAPER ON
YOUR DESK.



HUMANITY SHOULD
SHEDDER, JUST
THINKING IT IS
THERE!!





FIRSTLY, MAYBE I SHOULD TELL YOU HOW IMPORTANT THIS PIECE OF PAPER IS, ARTHUR?



YOU MIGHT BE A BRILLIANT STUDENT AT VICTORIA HALL AND A FAVORITE OF PROFESSOR BELL. I MUST, HOWEVER, EXPRESS MY RELUCTANCE ON WHETHER TO TELL YOU WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SAY. I'M TALKING ABOUT THE LARGEST SECRET OF MANKIND. BUT SEEING THE TRUST THAT MASTER VERNE HAS IN YOU AND THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION, I'LL HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE BUT TO TAKE THE RISK.



HOWEVER, YOU MUST KNOW THAT WHAT YOU WILL LEARN TODAY IS SO IMPORTANT THAT PEOPLE BEFORE ME HAVE WANTED TO BRIBE IT FROM HISTORICAL DATA BANKS...



LONG TIME AGO, OUR WORLD
WASN'T IN ANY WAY ALIKE
THE TECHNOLOGIC MACHINERY
IT HAS NOW BECOME... WE
LIVED IN A PROSPEROUS ERA
LIKE NO OTHER. HUMANS HAD
THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE IN REACH
OF THEIR HANDS.

WHAT WE WERE THINKING OF
WOULD TAKE FORM, AND OUR
Craziest Desires WERE
FILLED... ALL OF THIS WAS BE-
CAUSE OF PAPER, WRITING AND
IMAGINATION.

A LIMITLESS AND
PORTABLE RESOURCE
FOR HUMANS?

BUT LIKE IN
EVERY CLASSIC
STORY AND BAD
NOVEL...

...THE WORST
HAPPENED.

WHAT ARE YOU
TRYING TO TELL
ME?



WITHOUT ANYONE
KNOWING HOW,
WITHOUT ANYONE
KNOWING WHY,
ANYTHING WE
WROTE CAME TO
LIFE. ANYONE ABLE
TO WRITE COULD
CREATE HIS OWN
SERVANTS... THE
CREPENT CREA-
TURES CAPABLE OF
FULFILLING ANY
TASK GIVEN TO
THEM.

THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE
DEFINITION OF
HAPPINESS FOR EVERY
HUMAN IS VERY PERSONAL.
SOME ARE PROUD AND
POWER-GREEDY.
IN A SHORT TIME, EVERY-
THING STARTED TO GET OUT
OF CONTROL...

...AND WHAT
IS EASIER THAN PULLING
A TRIGGER...?

THE AUTHORITIES HAD TO
BECOME STRICTER.

NO MORE THAN TWO
HUNDREDS YEARS AGO,
AN ATROCIOUS WAR
BROKE OUT, THE MAIN
GOAL OF WHICH WAS TO
MAKE MANUSCRIPT
WRITING DISAPPEAR
FROM OUR LIVES.

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE
PERISHED IN THE PROCESS.

EVEN AFTER THE END OF THE
BATTLE IT TOOK SEVERAL
YEARS TO COMPLETELY
ERASE THE PAPER FROM ALL
AROUND THE WORLD AS WELL
AS ALL MATERIALS THAT COULD
ENABLE WRITING.

LITTLE BY LITTLE MANU-
SCRIPT WRITING WAS FOR-
GOTTEN AND BANNISHED
FROM SCHOOL COURSES...

IF NO ONE LEARNED HOW TO
MASTER IT AND THE WAY OF
MAKING PAPER WAS FOR-
GOTTEN THEN ALL OF US WOULD BE
SAYED, AND THAT WAS INDEED
THE CASE...

THAT IS TO SAY UNTIL
TODAY...



LET'S BE
SERIOUS
NOW!!!

THIS IS
UNLIKELY TO
REALLY HAVE
HAPPENED!

WHO COULD SERIOUSLY
BELIEVE THAT PAPER,
WHICH HAS BEEN
ABANDONED NOWADAYS
FOR ECONOMIC AND
ECOLOGIC REASONS, HAS
HAD MAGIC PROPERTIES
ENABLING ANYONE TO MAKE
HIS WRITINGS COME TO
LIFE!

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT
"MAGIC", BUT I
AGREE YOU THAT
EVERY WORD OF THIS
IS THE TRUTH.

I WON'T BELIEVE
IT...

THEN, MAYBE YOU'D
BELIEVE IT IF IT
WAS DISPLAYED TO
YOU, ARTIST!





ARE YOU SAYING
YOU ARE IN
POSSESSION OF
PAPER AND
MATERIALS TO
WRITE WITH?

DON'T TELL ME
YOU REALLY DID
THIS... PLEASE
TELL ME THAT
YOU GOT RID OF
EVERYTHING!!

I JUST TOOK MY PRECALCULATIONS IN CASE ANY PROGRAMS SHOULD ARISE, AND THE EVENTS ARE GOING HIS REASON, CARLTON...

I DID WHAT
I HAD TO
DO.

AND ALSO, WISTER VERNE, YES, WE HAVE EVERYTHING HERE TO LAUNCH OUR COUNTER ATTACK!



AND HERE I WAS THINKING
YOU WANTED TO SEE ME TO
HAVE MY OPINION AS A
WRITER...
YOU DON'T SERIOUSLY BELIEVE I'LL BE THE COUNTER
ATTACK, DO YOU??
I WOULD NEVER KNOW...

OF COURSE
YOU WILL...

AND WE BOTH
KNOW WHY...



I WANT TO
SEE THIS!!



ALL OF THESE
MONITORS...
DON'T TELL ME YOU
ARE A FAN OF TELE-
VISION SERIES...!



NOT REALLY! THEY BELONG TO THE TIME
WHEN PAPER WAS PROHIBITED...
TO CONTROL EVERYTHING, THE CITY HALL
SECRET SERVICES HAD INVENTED A CCTV
SYSTEM THAT REINFORCED THE DISINTEGRA-
TION CAMPAIGN!
AT THE TIME, NOTHING COULD ESCAPE THE
MAYOR'S EYES

CREEPY...

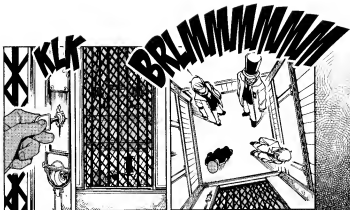
NO NEED TO WORRY.
NOWADAYS, BIG EYE IS
NOT IN USE ANYMORE!

I HOPE THAT WON'T CHANGE...



I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT
TO PROTECT YOUR DIRTY
LITTLE SECRET,
YOU BRANDED FROM HISTORY A
WAR THAT COST
THE LIVES OF SEVERAL
MILLION PEOPLE...!

ONE THING AT A TIME,
PLEASE...
WHY DON'T YOU WAIT
AND SEE IF WE HAVE
DUPED YOU...?



IT'D LIKE TO
SEE WHAT IS
WRITTEN ON
THAT SHEET OF
PAPER.

...AS WELL AS TO
KNOW WHAT ITS
CONSEQUENCES
WERE.

IT'S ABOUT THE
FINANCE MINISTER!!!



ARE YOU TELLING
ME HE WHO WROTE
THIS IS
RESPONSIBLE FOR
HIS OWN DEATH?



HE OR SHE!!

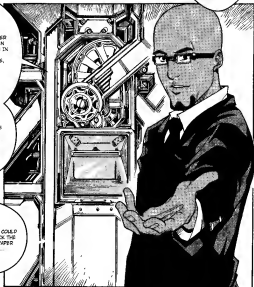
IMPOSSIBLE, THIS
WRITING STYLE IS THAT
OF A MAN - NOT SNOOKY
SILVERLY AND TOO
FULLY MADE CHARACTERS!

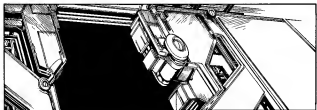
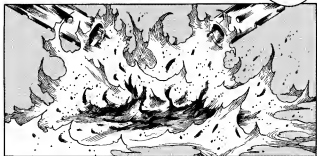
WAIT A SECOND...
THE PRESS THIS
MORNING WAS TALKING
ABOUT AN
EXPLOSION DUE TO A
GAS LEAK...

THE FOURTH POWER
HAS ALWAYS BEEN
A SMOKE SCREEN IN
ORDER TO
CALM THE PEOPLE,
JULIE...

DON'T TELL ME
YOU
SNOORED IT?

NOW, IF YOU COULD
GIVE ME BACK THE
SHEET OF PAPER
PLEASE...







IMPRESSIVE!!

TO ENTER HERE, YOU
NEED TO GIVE UP
PAPER...

IN OTHER WORDS,
TO ACCESS THE STOKO,
YOU HAVE TO GIVE UP
YOUR MOST PRECIOUS
POSSESSION.

WITHOUT KNOWING
WHETHER YOU'LL FIND
WHAT YOU ARE SEEKING OR
NOT...



GOOD DISSEMINATION...

BUT FOR SUCH A
SECRET,
YOU NEED THE
MEANS TO KEEP IT.

DON'T YOU?



PROBABLY,
YES... HUH...

THIS TRAP SEEMS MORE
COMPLEX, MORE CUNNING
THAN THE OTHERS...
WHICHEVER OPENS THIS
COMMON METAL BOX
WILL BE REPLACED TO
ARMS & IF HE DOESN'T
KNOW WHERE TO
PRESS...



THIS ENIGMA IS MY BEST
FINDING, ONLY I KNOW THE
KEY TO IT!

I MUST SAY, I
AM REALLY
PROUD THAT NO
THIEF HAS EVER
SOLVED IT.



YOU MUST KNOW THAT
WHOEVER POSSESSES ITS
CONTENTS BECOME...

I SUPPOSE A
GOD!

HOWEVER, A QUESTION NEEDS
TO BE ANSWERED BEFORE
OPENING THE PANDORA'S BOX



WHY NO, IS
IT?

AND I BELIEVE
CARLTON AND
ARTHUR HAVE A
RIGHT TO KNOW...

FIRSTLY, I LIKE MORTY
VERNE'S WORKS AND I EAGERLY
AWAIT THE RELEASE OF EACH
OF HIS DIGITAL BOOKS.
BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY,
SEVERAL YEARS AGO, WHEN WE
THOUGHT PAPER HAD
COMPLETELY DISAPPEARED,
A SHEET APPEARED OUT OF THE
BLUE;
PROBABLY A REMINDER OF THE
BLACK MARKET.
A WEALTHY BUSINESSMAN THEN
OFFERED IT TO HIS SON FOR
HIS BIRTHDAY.

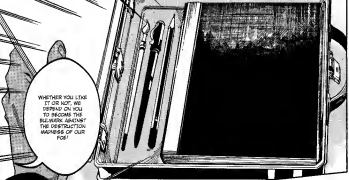


THIS SON HAD RECEIVED
THE NECESSARY EDUCATION
AND KNEW HOW TO
USE A PEN.
AND HE, NOT KNOWING
WHAT THE
CONSEQUENCES WOULD
BE, PLUNGED HALF THE
COUNTRY IN TOTAL
DEPRESSION AND CHAOS
FOR DAYS AND DAYS.

IF I REMEMBER
WELL, THAT BOY WAS
ONLY TEN AT THE
TIME...



TRUTH BE TOLD, I HAD
JUST PASSED MY
ELEVENTH BIRTHDAY
WORK...



WHETHER YOU LIKE
IT OR NOT, WE
DEPEND ON YOU
TO SECURE THE
EQUILIBRIUM AGAINST
THE DESTRUCTION
WAGNESS OF OUR
FOS!



I DIDN'T WANT TO
BELIEVE IT, BUT IT
WAS REALLY TRUE!!
YOU'VE GONE MAD,
MALCOLM!!
KEEPING SUCH
FIREPOWER IS
SHICIBS!!



CALM DOWN,
CARLSON!!

THIS NOTE AND ITS MATERIALS
ARE SAFE.
I NEEDED TO HAVE THEM FOR
SAFEKEEPING IN THIS BOX IN
CASE A DAY SUCH AS THIS ONE
WERE TO COME...



I NOTICE THE SMART PROTECTION
SYSTEM THAT YOU DIDN'T USE!!



THAT'S RIGHT,
ARTHEK!

THE TRUE TRAP WAS THAT
THERE WAS NONE!!
HOWEVER, NONE OF THE
PEOPLE WHO HAD THE
OPPORTUNITY TO OPEN
IT DARED...WHAT FOOL
WOULD HIDE A POWER
CAPABLE OF SHAKING
THE WORLD UPSIDE
DOWN IN A COMMON
SNACK BOX...?



IT IS HIGH TIME OUR INVESTIGATORS ARE ARMED AS PROPERLY AS THE CRIMINALS THEY ARE CHASING ARE...

EVEN THOUGH I IGNORE WHICH TOOL WILL SUIT YOU MOST, JULIE!

INVESTIGATORS?

CONGRATULATIONS, GENTLEMEN! WELCOME TO THE POLICE FORCE!!

AS FOR YOU, SIR CONAN DOYLE, YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND WHY I CANNOT GIVE YOU SUCH AN IMPORTANT WEAPON!

AS OF NOW, I HAVE YET TO SEE ANY PROOF OF THIS BEING TRUE...



LET'S GO THEN...



ONK ONK ONK ONK

BIP
BIP
BIP

WHOEVER OUR ENEMY
IS, HE'S LAUNCHED
ANOTHER ATTACK! A
10 METER-HIGH PA-
PERBUNT IS RAGING
IN TOWN...
BUT OUR ENEMY
DOESN'T SUSPECT
THAT WE HAVE THE
POWER TO COUNTER-
ATTACK.

A PAPERBUNT??

THAT'S WHAT
THE PAPER BUNGE
CREATURES ARE
CALLED...!

WE MUSTN'T LOSE ANY
TIME. WE HAVE THE
MEANS TO ANSWER
NOW! PEOPLE COULD
BE HURT, OR EVEN
WORSE. WE NEED TO
GO NOW!!

GOOD LUCK,
GENTLE-
MEN...!!

READY TO LIVE THE
GREATEST ADVENTURE
OF YOUR
LIFE, ARTHUR??

"ADVENTURE"??
THEY ARE ONLY SNOTTY
NOSED BRATS, AND YOU
JUST GAVE THEM THE
MEANS TO ANNIHILATE
THE PLANET, MALCOLM!!

...AND WHAT'S WORSE,
I'M NOT EVEN SURE IF
THEY'LL SURVIVE THE
DAY!!

IT'S NECESSARY
THOUGH...THEY'RE
OUR ONLY HOPE...

IF THEY FAIL,
WE'RE DOOMED...



CARLTON LESTER

CHIEF INSPECTOR OF THE CITY HALL POLICE FORCE, UN-
RIVALLED INVESTIGATOR, HE REPRESENTS THE POLICE. HE
HAS A DARK TEMPER, AND EASILY GETS ANGRY, AS
SOON HE'S BECOME FAMOUS FOR THIS, HE IS RESPECTED
BY HIS MEN AND HE IS AN EXPERIENCED POLICEMAN
THAT IS TO BE FEARED...

